

THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers
and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

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WHEN FOUND—

THE energy and zeal with which the 97th anniversary of Dickens's birth was celebrated throughout the world augurs well for the centenary which is looming in the very near distance. In another section of our Magazine will be found reports of some of these meetings, but want of space alone prevents us from going into details of the excellence of many of the speeches delivered on the occasion. Apart from these celebrations, references in the Press show, if it were necessary, that the enthusiasm for Dickens is not the enthusiasm of a cult, but a natural enthusiasm over a possession of which Englishmen are proud. Commenting on the Boz Club Dinner, Mr. Edward Dicey, in the *Sunday Times*, said: "To my thinking, he (Dickens) was the greatest literary genius produced by the nineteenth century, and I am not certain whether he is a greater man of letters than any other recorded in our literary annals, with the exception of Shakespeare."

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The anniversary falling on a Sunday, the Boz Club Dinner afforded the opportunity for actors and actresses to take part in the function, and many availed themselves of it under the chairmanship of Mr. George Alexander; whilst in the Glasgow Cathedral a special service was held, the preacher being the Rev. Dr. P. M'Adam Muir, who pointed out that the main object of the service was to make an appeal on behalf of the fund for the endowment of a Dickens Cot in the Sick Children's Hospital. During the service the prayer which appears on another page of our present issue was used, and at the close the congregation joined in singing the hymn "Hear my prayer, O Heavenly Father," from *The Wreck of the Golden Mary*, written by Dickens.

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One of the best speeches delivered, so far as we have seen, was that of Principal Sir Donald MacAlister in connection with the Glasgow Dickens Society. He spoke in general terms of Dickens's greatness with clearness and simplicity, and without the least touch of exaggeration. Incidentally he told the following story:—The Germans, he was told, had a journal devoted to their linguistic eccentricities, and it contained from time to time most painstaking and bewildered articles on the "Dickenser Sprachschatz." One German professor expended a prodigious amount of philological and mythological research on the mysterious word "adun," which occurred in *Pickwick*. Its possible and probable relations to Anglo-Saxon and Gothic, Hebrew, and Phœnician were discussed, and the question whether it was a noun, a verb, an adjective, or an

interjection was impressively debated. But, still, its true meaning eluded his inquiry until he consulted a young lady now resident in Glasgow. She read the passage, and with a blush declared the meaning was obvious to the meanest capacity. Our readers will all remember the incident where the word occurred, when Mary said, "Lor' do adun, Mr. Weller."

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During his spare moments for some time past Mr. Bransby Williams has been writing a book, which will shortly be published under the title of "An Actor's Story." Mr. Williams is still a young man, but his career on the stage has been so varied, notable and successful that he must have encountered much to record, and it may therefore be expected that his book will be full of interest to that vast public he performs before nightly. To Dickensians it will naturally appeal, for he was the originator of the idea, which has been so universally emulated, of impersonating the characters from Dickens's books on the music hall stage. He has often told us how the idea was laughed at by those to whom he first suggested it, but, persevering in his conviction that the contrary would be the case, he has made for himself the name of "The Dickens Actor"; and if imitation is the sincerest form of flattery he should indeed be proud to-day, for it would be difficult to say how many entertainers are following his example. Like most actors, Mr. Williams had to face many trials, and in his book he tells the story of his early struggling days, as well as his successful ones. Although known to-day chiefly as a wonderful mimic of others and the Dickens Actor, he has studied every phase of the actor's art and taken part in Christy Minstrelsy, comic opera, drama, pantomime, fairy extravaganza, comedy, tragedy, and his present popularity should find him many readers for his book. It will be fully illustrated.

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In the souvenir programme of the "Merry Widow" Dinner given to the company of Daly's Theatre by the O.P. Club on January 31st, at the Hotel Cecil, the following words appeared:—"This Dinner is given by the O.P. Club as a small recognition of the immense amount of enjoyment that Mr. George Edwardes and his colleagues have given to us by introducing 'The Merry Widow' to the playgoers of this country. We are only sorry that Mr. Weller senior did not live to see her. If he had, we feel sure that the charming Sonia would have altered the status of the 'vidder' in the immortal criticism he made on the type for the benefit of his son Samuel."

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The next meeting of the Fellowship in London takes place at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, on March 3rd, at 8 o'clock. On that occasion Mr. M. H. Spielmann, F.S.A., will give a lantern lecture entitled "Humour in Art," which should by no means be missed. Mr. Spielmann is one of our foremost art critics, and, in taking the humorous side of his subject, he has chosen a phase which should be greatly to the taste of the admirers of England's greatest humorist. Tickets for non-members, price sixpence each.

THE DEATH OF DICKENS'S LITTLE DORA A MEMORABLE LETTER AND PRAYER

By JOHN SUDDABY (of the Hull Branch)

NEITHER Forster's biography of Dickens, the subsequently published three volumes of his letters, nor any other work relating to England's great and popular author, contains, so far as I have ascertained, the letter and prayer which Charles Dickens wrote to his wife in 1851, the day after his infant girl—Dora Annie—died. The child was the ninth of his family of ten, and the third of his daughters, and the only one of their children to die in infancy.

For some years after Dickens died, as is often the case with great and public men, miscellaneous and wayside notes relating to him appeared now and then in the daily and weekly newspapers and other periodicals. Remembrances, quotations, and a variety of matter by various people and from various sources appeared, not only in the leading journals, but in out-of-the-way papers, according to the whereabouts of the contributors. There was a flood of recollections, which has more or less flowed even to the present day through a lapse of nearly forty years. And whilst some of these early contributions have been embodied in later well-known works, other items have remained buried, little known, or almost lost sight of during this long stretch of time. Items thus astray, so to speak, were not then for a while so collected and made "a note of" as they are to-day, and have been for the last few years. The army of collectors and the miscellany for the recording and discussion of Dickensiana had not then sprung up. Our *Dickensian* has, however, for four years, been of good service in providing a storehouse for worthy matters relating to the great author. Both current and past matters have found an abiding place in its pages, and there is little doubt that in years to come the set of its annual volumes will be greatly in reference for historical matters of Dickens. And feeling that the almost unknown letter of Dickens and his beautiful prayer to which I am alluding should be generally known, I forward copies. Having been acquainted with them for nearly thirty-four years I may say I have always been struck with the sublimeness and beauty of the prayer whenever I have read it over. Dickens's Christianity stands out pre-eminently in the letter to his youngest son, Edward Bulwer Lytton Dickens, on the day of his embarkation for Australia, in 1868, and also in his will bearing date May 12th, 1869. And this prayer of 1851, of seventeen to eighteen years before, is a third great link in the religious chain of his life and writings.

To proceed, however. The time is the spring of 1851. The previous year had been a very busy one with Dickens; he had finished *David Copperfield* and embarked upon *Household Words*, to be followed by *All the Year Round*, thus entering upon that twenty years of weekly serial writing which only terminated on his death. And he had also in view the publication of another book, which work took the form of *Bleak House* in 1852. His residence at Devonshire Terrace, where he had lived since 1839, was about drawing to a close. It was in August, 1850, that in writing *David Copperfield* he "ended" the character of Dora, and on the 15th of that month his

third daughter was born and given the name of Dora Annie. Early in the following year both Mrs. Dickens and the infant were stricken with illness, and in March, whilst the latter had apparently recovered, Mrs. Dickens was still unwell, and it was decided that she should go to Great Malvern for a while with her sister, leaving Dickens in London with the children, he going to Great Malvern occasionally. At the end of the month Dickens's father died, being buried on April 5th, so that the author was in the midst of trouble.

On Monday, April 14th, Dickens was to take the chair at the General Theatrical Fund Dinner; he bravely came from Malvern to fulfil an engagement so dear to his heart. He made an eloquent and forcible speech on behalf of the charity, and it was whilst he was at the dinner that the child Dora died suddenly. In a letter to Thomas Mitton on the Friday following he wrote: "I played with little Dora before I went, and was told when I left the chair that she had died in a moment. I am quite happy again, but I have undergone a great deal." Forster, in his biography, states that the servant from Devonshire Terrace brought the news of the child's death to the dinner room, but he went out and received it, keeping it from Dickens until after he had made his speech.

Forster records that it was with great anguish he heard Dickens "speak of actors having to come from scenes of sickness, of suffering, aye, even of death itself, to play their parts before us. Yet how often it is with all of us that in our several spheres we have to do violence to our feelings, and to hide our hearts in carrying on this fight for life, if we would bravely discharge in it our duties and responsibilities." Forster a little later, assisted by Mr. Lemon, disclosed to Dickens the death of little Dora; and the next morning, whilst Lemon was left with Dickens, Forster proceeded to Malvern to fetch Mrs. Dickens home; and a letter and a prayer sent by the bereaved novelist to his wife are as follow:—

"Devonshire Terrace,

"Tuesday morning, 15th April, 1851.

"MY DEAREST KATE,—Now observe, you must read this letter very slowly and carefully. If you have hurried on thus far without quite understanding (apprehending some bad news) I rely on your turning back and reading again. Little Dora, without being in the least pain, is suddenly stricken ill. There is nothing in her appearance but perfect rest—you would suppose her quietly asleep—but I am sure she is very ill, and I cannot encourage myself with much hope of her recovery. I do not (and why should I say I do to you, my dear?) I do not think her recovery at all likely. I do not like to leave home, I can do no good here, but I think it right to stay. You will not like to be away, I know, and I cannot reconcile it to myself to keep you away. Forster, with his usual affection for us, comes down to bring you this letter, and to bring you home, but I cannot close it without putting the strongest entreaty and injunction upon you to come with perfect composure—to remember what I have often told you, that we never can expect to be exempt, as to our many children, from the afflictions of other parents, and that if—if when you come I should even have to say to you, 'Our little baby is dead,' you are to

do your duty to the rest, and to show yourself worthy of the great trust you hold in them. If you will only read this steadily I have a perfect confidence in your doing what is right.

“Ever affectionately,

“(Signed) CHARLES DICKENS.”

PRAYER AT NIGHT.

Oh Lord, our Heavenly Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, who in Thy inestimable goodness hast directed and preserved us during the past day, and brought us to another night surrounded by such great blessings and instances of Thy mercy, we beseech Thee to hear our heartfelt thanks for all the benefits which we enjoy, and our humble prayers that we may cheerfully endeavour every day of our lives to be in some degree more worthy of their possession. Sanctify and improve to us any good thought that has been presented to us in any form during this day. Forgive us the sins we have committed during its progress, and in our past lives all the wrong we have done, and all the negligences and ignorances of which we have been guilty, and enable us to find in any trials we have undergone, or sorrows we have known or have yet to experience, blessed instruction for our future happiness. We humbly pray, Almighty Father, for our dear children, that Thou wilt vouchsafe to watch over and preserve them from all danger and evil, for ourselves that Thou wilt prolong our lives, health and energies for many years for their dear sakes, and for them and us that Thou wilt grant us cheerfulness of spirit, tranquility and content, that we may be honest and true in all our dealings, and gentle and merciful to the faults of others, remembering of how much gentleness and mercy we stand in need ourselves, that we may earnestly try to live in Thy true faith, honour and love, and in charity and goodwill with our fellow-creatures, that we may worship Thee in every beautiful and wonderful thing Thou hast made, and sympathise with the whole world of Thy glorious creation. Grant that in the contemplation of Thy wisdom and goodness, and in reverence for our Lord Jesus Christ, we may endeavour to do our duty in those stations of life to which it pleases Thee to call us, and be held together in a bond of affection and mutual love which no change or lapse of time can weaken, which shall sustain and teach us to do right in all reverses of good or evil, and which shall comfort and console us most when we most require support, by filling us in the hour of sickness and death with a firm reliance on Thee, and the assurance that through Thy great mercy we shall meet again in another and happy state of existence beyond the grave, where care and grief and parting are unknown, and where we shall be once again united to the dear friends lost to us on this earth. Pardon, Gracious God, the imperfections of our prayers and thanks, and read them in our hearts, rather than in these feeble and imperfect words. Hear our supplications in behalf of the poor, the sick, the destitute and the guilty, and grant Thy blessing on the diffusion of increased happiness and knowledge among the great mass of mankind, that they may not be tempted to the commission of crimes which in want and man's neglect it is hard to

resist. Bless and keep our dear children and those who are nearest and dearest to us, and by Thy help and our Saviour's teaching enable us to lay our heads on our pillows every night at peace with all the world, and may His grace and Thy love and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen."

The singular thing about this touching relic of Dickens is that it first appeared in the far-off island of Ceylon, where, according to the hymn "From Greenland's icy mountains," &c.,

"The spiey breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle."

Its appearance was in the *Observer* of July 11th, 1874, with the following preface from the contributor:—

"I send you what is valuable in its way, for publication, a copy of a letter of Dickens to his wife, which, so far as I know, has never seen the light, followed by a beautiful prayer. They came into my possession, shortly after Dickens's death, in a peculiar way, which I need not here explain."

A month after its publication it came before the late Mr. Wm. Hunt, an editor of Hull, who was then publishing a weekly literary paper, the *Criterion*, as well as ordinary newspapers, and he clipped it into that journal; and I have now made an abstract of the letter and prayer from a volume of the *Criterion* recently presented to the Hull Wilberforce Museum. In 1874 I was a journalist with Mr. Hunt, and he was often chatty as to Dickens, as they had been contemporary reporters at Exeter as far back as 1835, the occasion being the hustings nomination for the South Devon election. Mr. Hunt was then in the humbler capacity of a local correspondent, whilst Dickens was in the height of his reporting period, officiating for the London *Morning Chronicle*, and some thirty or so years later he was present in London at a press dinner at which Dickens was present. It is not to be wondered at that Mr. Hunt should transfer from the Ceylon *Observer* to his own journal the then "unpublished letter and prayer of Dickens" as above.

Mr. Hunt tells the following story in some reminiscences as to Dickens and the election in question:—

"It was in returning to town with his copy that he was beaten by Mr. Denison, the reporter of the *Times*. The reporters had each a pair of horses, and left Exeter at about the same time. On nearing Honiton, sixteen miles away (where Mr. Hunt then lived), Denison, who knew more of the neighbourhood and the ways of the innkeepers there, told his postboy to run into the 'Golden Lion' yard by the back way, and this was done. Denison knew that a pair of horses would be ready harnessed in the yard, with the postboy waiting for a job, and he calculated that by coming in at the back way he would obtain possession of them before his *confrère* alighted and entered by the front door. In this anticipation Denison was right; he secured the horses, and took the lead away from Honiton."

To revert to the quoted prayer, it is elegantly formulated, so expressive and beautiful that one might almost wish it to be universally adopted as "Dickens's prayer." Many an eloquent elocutionist and reciter could do worse than quoting it, others might beneficially

give it at Sunday afternoons in churches and chapels when Dickens is to the fore; it could be published and placed on the walls of rich and poor, and it might be kept in sight for use at the Dickens Centenary in February, 1912, now approaching.

In 1874 the letter is quoted as dated "1847," but it clearly should be 1851 as now given. Probably Dickens, in sending it to his wife, saw no occasion to put in the year, and that the contributor to the *Ceylon Observer* added it.

DICKENS IN IRELAND

By JACK SHAW

II

THE Fenian agitation of 1867 was at its height when Charles Dickens visited Ireland for the second time in the spring of that year. It seemed as if the troublous state of the country would greatly interfere with the success of the readings, and from the reports which reached the party on the other side prior to the visit it was evident that a trying time was before them, and no very satisfactory results could be anticipated. The news from Belfast regarding the letting of reserved seats for the one reading there was reassuring enough, but in Dublin the prospects were by no means encouraging. The readings arranged for this tour were as follows:— On Friday, March 15th, 1867, at Dublin, *Doctor Marigold* and "Trial from Pickwick." On Monday, March 18th, at Dublin, *David Copperfield* and "Bob Sawyer's Party." On Wednesday, March 20th, at Belfast, *Doctor Marigold* and "Trial." On Friday, March 22nd, at Dublin, *Carol* and "Trial." Dickens was accompanied on this occasion by George Dolby (his new manager), Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, Mr. W. H. Wills, and others of his circle of friends. On arriving at Kingstown, a foretaste of the state of affairs in Dublin was vouchsafed them in the seizure by the police of some of their baggage on the quay. The long wooden box, in particular, in which the gas-fittings for the platform were carried, appeared, viewed from the cautious official eye, to contain nothing less than deadly explosives for the use of the Fenians. It was accordingly appropriated, in spite of the vigorous protestations of Dickens and his friends, and examined then and there. To the breathless and admiring crowd which assembled while the police thus discharged their duty the exposure of the innocent gas-piping was a matter of considerable disappointment!

When Dickens reached Dublin he found there was good reason for alarm. The city was in a state of great unrest, the streets being alive with constabulary and soldiers. As a precaution all the public-houses were ordered to be closed from Saturday evening until the following Tuesday, as it was feared that St. Patrick's Day, which intervened, might be marked by a serious disturbance. Dickens, on this occasion, stayed at the Shelbourne Hotel, whose manager he described as "an intelligent and agreeable German," from whom he gleaned much valuable information on the subject of the Fenians.

Contrary to all expectation, the first reading in Dublin proved an

unqualified success. Two days previously scarcely 50 stalls had been let, while for the single Belfast reading over 300 had been booked a long time in advance. As the evening drew on, however, a great change set in; crowds began to wend their way to the Rotunda, and long before eight o'clock the room was packed to excess. Among many well-known persons present on this occasion were the Protestant Archbishop Trench, Professor Dowden, Rev. Dr. Tisdall, Mr. R. Keating Clay, Master Lytton, the Dean of Emly, Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, Sir Charles Cameron and others. Professor Dowden says that as a reader Dickens was not to be compared with Mrs. Kemble, whose reading of *The Tempest* still lingers in his ears. Dickens's eye, he says, in speaking of the reading, kept roving throughout his audience from this face to that, as if seeking for some expression of the effect he was creating.

On the evening of March 16th, Dickens and his friends were entertained to dinner by an old and intimate friend in Dublin. All the luminaries of the city were invited, and amongst them many official dignitaries and military authorities. Throughout the evening despatches were continually arriving for a distinguished officer who was among the guests and reputed to be well versed in the doings of the Fenians; and it was clear that every movement was being carefully watched and reported in detail. During dinner Dickens expressed a wish to drive round the city and see for himself the condition of affairs. This he did, accompanied by Mr. Dolby and their host, and returned satisfied that whatever disturbance might take place within the next few days, the arrangements made by the authorities were more than sufficient to quell effectually. Nothing in the nature of a serious riot took place, and by the following Monday the usual tranquillity of the city was greatly restored. On that evening Dickens again drew an enormous audience to the Rotunda to hear him read *David Copperfield* and "Bob Sawyer's Party."

The next day he went to Belfast. On the previous visit he wrote from the northern city as follows:—"This is a fine place, surrounded by lofty hills. The streets are very wide and the place is very prosperous. The whole ride from Dublin here is through a very picturesque and varied country, and the amazing thing is that it is all particularly neat and orderly, and that the houses (outside, at all events,) are all brightly whitewashed and remarkably clean."

The reading took place in the Ulster Hall on the evening of March 20th, the programme comprising *Doctor Marigold* and "Trial from Pickwick." The following is an extract from the *Northern Whig* of March 21st, 1867:—

The large hall was crowded in every part last night to hear Mr. Dickens read *Doctor Marigold* and the "Trial from Pickwick." All yesterday, indeed, disconsolate persons were going about vainly seeking for tickets of admission. The audience was brilliant, and the appearance of Mr. Dickens was, of course, the signal for an enthusiastic greeting. Mr. Dickens is one of the very few great authors who are also great actors. Had not Mr. Dickens been the unrivalled delineator of modern English life, he might still have been one of the most vigorous and versatile of actors. If we take the most popular and well-known passages of his works, with Mr.

Dickens himself as the interpreter, we shall find that, as he speaks, many latent beauties rise vividly before us, and our old friends are endowed with a life which the pen, even at best, cannot fully depict. Mr. Dickens carefully avoids making the dramatic faculty too prominent in his reading. He calls the imagination of his audience into play; they are to fill up what he leaves incomplete. This is just what the very best reading, that is reading and not acting, ought to be.

Doctor Marigold, the first of Mr. Dickens's readings last night, is one of his latest productions. The Cheap Jack coming into the world by the assistance of a doctor who would accept no fee but a tea-tray, was immediately accepted as one of Mr. Dickens's most successful characters. *Doctor Marigold* had all the author's humour and pathos, and blended both



THE ULSTER HALL, BELFAST

Where Dickens gave his Readings in 1867 and 1869

these qualities in a graphic picture which posterity will not willingly let die. We should say that this creation is one of Mr. Dickens's own favourites, for we observed that he spoke the words, and never referred to the printed page of *All the Year Round*. What a lesson is taught by the affection of the rude and boisterous Cheap Jack for his little Sophy who dies in his arms, and by the adoption of that other child who could not be "deaf nor dumb," and whose torpid faculties are gradually called into action! The philanthropist can heartily sympathise with it; the clergyman may advantageously study it, and acknowledge that he can learn something of that religion of which the basis is love. The applause of the audience was not loud throughout the reading of *Doctor Marigold*; but Mr. Dickens fully commanded their sympathies, and tears were in many eyes.

In Belfast Dickens stayed at the Imperial Hotel. He returned to Dublin for the final reading of the series on March 22nd, and the following day left Ireland, which he visited for the last time early in 1869.

(To be concluded.)

THE LONELY CHURCH ON THE MARSHES

By W. LAWRENCE GADD

THE scene of Pip's first adventure with the Convict, in *Great Expectations*, has been universally accepted to be Cooling Church, mainly on the authority of John Forster, than whom no one can lay claim to better knowledge; and also because the thirteen lozenge-shaped gravestones, referred to in the opening chapter, are undoubtedly situated in this churchyard. In his "Life of Charles Dickens," Forster speaks of the wonderful vividness with which the written words bring back to him the spot on which the author stood when he said he *meant* to make it the scene of the opening of his story; but, although Cooling Church is admittedly the one Dickens had largely in mind when writing the book, yet I venture to express the opinion that he imported features from another church, and, for his own purposes, transplanted the edifice to another locality with which he must have been equally familiar.

Cooling Church agrees, in many respects, with the written description, except as regards its position. It stands, not on the marsh itself, but some little distance therefrom, and the road from Higham or Cliffe to Halstow skirts round two sides of the low churchyard wall, which would make this an unlikely spot for an escaped convict to hide in. About one hundred yards to the west lies the ruin of Cooling Castle, and on the east side of the church the houses of the village practically adjoin the churchyard.

The situation of the Church of St. Mary, or the "Little Church," at Lower Higham, some two or three miles west of Cooling, seems to me to fit the circumstances of the story far better than does that of St. James's Church at Cooling. It is an exceedingly picturesque old structure, clothed, on its southern side, with green and red-leaved creepers, and its red-tiled roofs surmounted by a quaint wooden steeple. It stands practically on the marsh itself, which stretches away from the very churchyard wall, a low erection built partly of brick and partly of chalk and flints.

The village of Lower Higham stands "on the flat in-shore" about a mile away, and the road, or lane, from the village leads to nowhere, beyond the church, except to the marshes. Standing by the church, the village of Lower Higham is invisible, owing to the trees and also to slight folds of ground, which hide the houses from view. This village is just about four miles from Rochester—"I set off on the four mile walk to our forge" (Chapter VIII.).

In Chapter V. of *Great Expectations*, Pip says: "We struck out on the open marshes through the gate at the side of the churchyard—a bitter sleet came rattling against us here on the east wind." There was thus a gate leading directly on to the marsh, and the old battery was evidently east of the church. The site of the only old battery remembered hereabouts was east of Higham and west of Cooling, and at Higham Church there is a gate, at the north-east corner of the graveyard, leading directly out on to the marshes, whereas the gates at Cooling Church both face away from the marsh, and open on to the road running along the west side of the wall.

Higham churchyard is now ringed with fine elm trees, but I was

told that these were planted by the grandfather of my informant, about eighty-four years ago, so that at the period of the story they were non-existent, and the scene would appear much more bleak and desolate than it is now.

It is true that on the south or inland side of the church there are a few cottages, and to the east an old priory, now, apparently, a farm, in close proximity, the hamlet being designated "Church Street, Lower Higham"; but, with the exception of the priory and a thatched cottage, said to be the former vicarage, none of the houses appear to be very ancient, and, from the marsh side of the church, all are invisible.

Standing in the old churchyard on a quiet afternoon, with the wide expanse of the marshes, intersected with many dykes, and dotted with grazing cattle, stretching from one's feet to such a distance that the river appears a grey streak almost on the horizon, the sense of loneliness and solitude is very strongly marked, and I have personally little doubt that the situation and other features of this church largely influenced the author when describing the "church on the marshes."

That Dickens was well acquainted with this church can hardly be doubted. In view of his well-known passion for walking, and his intimate knowledge of the whole of the country round Gad's Hill, but I have the testimony of the sexton that he himself remembers seeing Mr. Dickens many times in this neighbourhood.

I think the reasonable and right explanation is that, in describing the scene in *Great Expectations*, Dickens had in mind the whole of the locality, or marsh country, and did not photographically depict any one portion of it. The quaint gravestones at Cooling; the old battery at Cliffe; the prison ships at Egypt Bay, away beyond Cooling; and the solitary church at Higham, were all familiar objects to him, and were utilised in his own masterly manner, in building up the scene of Pip's adventure. It is a peculiarity of Dickens's descriptions, and a strong tribute to the author, that one is forced to form a vivid mental picture of any scene which he describes, and such a scene of this lonely church I have carried in my mind since I first read *Great Expectations*.

It is only recently that I have had the opportunity of visiting, for the first time, this marsh country, and it was at Lower Higham church that I felt I was on familiar ground, and contemplating a scene which accorded with my preconceived mental picture.

A CURIOUS GIFT TO DICKENS

By J. H. JOHNSTON

I N 1867, when Charles Dickens was in New York, my wife and I went and heard him in one of his readings, and on the way home I said to her, "I wish I could think of something that would please him in the way of a present that he would like to receive, and always enjoy; he lacks nothing in the way of jewellery, for he has chains, rings, studs and buttons, so it must be something out of the usual." I went to sleep still trying to think of

something suitable, and the next morning it flashed through my mind that while travelling through this country he had had to handle our paper currency, and I had carefully collected several full sets of the "shinplasters" we had used during the civil war, and I at once thought that a framed set of this currency would be an everlasting reminder of his visit here. I had one set—in fact a double set—so as to show the front and back of each of the many issues framed already, and I wrote him a letter asking him to accept it, and sent it to the Westminster Hotel, where he was stopping.

I received no reply to my letter, and some time later I was in an artist's studio, and, Dickens's name being mentioned, I related my experience, and my artist friend exclaimed: "Why, Mr. Johnston—he never received it! You go up to the Westminster, and you will find your gift in the baggage room. If you don't find it, write him and ask him if he received it."

I went at once to the hotel, but did not find it, and by the next mail I wrote to Dickens and received the enclosed reply.

8ads Hill Place.

Higham by Rochester Kent.

Monday Twenty-fourth August 1868

Dear Sir

I have the pleasure of assuring you in reply to our obliging letter, that your present of a set of samples of the paper currency in the States, occupies a post of honor on these walls. I did not know to whom I was obliged for that interesting and curious relic. In the hurry and confusion of an enormous correspondence, the gift had become dissociated from the giver, and consequently I need not thank you for your kindness and I now do, most heartily and cordially

Believe me Dear Sir

Very Faithfully Yours
 Mark Twain

Mr John H Johnston

While in London in 1902-3 I joined the Dickens Fellowship, and at the one only meeting I attended I showed the original letter, and made a short speech.

THE DICKENS ANNIVERSARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS IN LONDON THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

THE Essex Hall was crowded on February 8th, when the 97th anniversary of Dickens's birth was celebrated by the Fellowship. Mr. Henry F. Dickens, K.C., had been announced to preside, but he was detained in the North of England by a professional engagement, and Sir John Hare most kindly took his place at short notice. Among those present were Miss Georgina Hogarth, Mrs. Henry F. Dickens, Mrs. Perugini, the Misses Olive and Elaine Dickens, Sir Wm. P. Treloar, Bart., Mr. Edwin Pugh, etc.

The chairman, having read a telegram from Mr. Dickens and a letter from the American Ambassador, quoted the objects of the Fellowship, and asked if any object could be more worthy, or any tribute more noble. Dickens was a modest man, but his breast would have swelled with honest pride if he could have foreseen that the great purpose of his life and work would be fulfilled, and that thousands of the poor, the needy, and the oppressed would live to bless his name. The memory of Charles Dickens would never fade. No man would ever fill his vacant throne. Year by year the seed sown by this great writer and benefactor must increase and multiply, and his name would for ever be held in the hearts of his countrymen in honour and deep affection. (Applause.)

Sir William Treloar, who was cordially received, gave a delightful address, full of humorous recollections of the year during which he was Lord Mayor of London. He proclaimed himself a lover of Dickens, and told how he and his wife in their early days used to go and hear the novelist read, and stand outside the hall for an hour or more in order to get a good seat.

Mr. Edwin Pugh also gave a brief address.

A delightful feature of the evening was the playing of two violin solos by Miss Elaine Dickens, who is an accomplished violinist. Mme. Micklebacher delighted the audience with a song, and Mr. Sydney G. Beaman earned hearty applause by some clever impersonations of Dickens characters.

A vote of thanks was accorded to Sir John Hare and to all who had contributed to the evening's success, on the motion of Mr. W. Dexter.

Reports of the Branches' celebrations will be found on another page.

THE BOZ CLUB DINNER

The annual dinner of the Boz Club was held at the Prince's Restaurant on February 7th, under the chairmanship of Mr. George Alexander. Among those present were Lord Lilford, Lord Massereene and Ferrard, Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Dickens, Mrs. Kate Perugini, Miss Georgina Hogarth, the Misses Olive and Elaine Dickens, Mr. H. C. Dickens, Sir Anderson and Lady Critchett, Sir Squire Bancroft, Sir Luke Fildes, Sir Charles and Lady Mathews, Sir John and Lady Hare, Sir George Frampton, Sir Walter Lawrence, Sir Malcolm and Lady Morris, Sir Bruce and Lady Seton, Sir E. A. Waterloo, Sir Richard R. Holmes, Sir H. and Lady Bushman, Sir W.

and Lady Allechin, Mrs. J. M. Barrie, Miss Lillian Braithwaite, Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, Mr. J. Martin Harvey, Mr. W. W. Jacobs, Mr. Walter Jerrold, Mr. John Lane, Mr. J. MacWhirter, Mr. E. T. Reed, Mr. Pett Ridge, Mr. and Mrs. Briton Riviere, Mr. and Mrs. Marcus Stone, Mr. B. W. Matz, and Mr. J. W. T. Ley.

The Chairman proposed the toast of "The Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens." He said that every actor must be very grateful to Charles Dickens for what he did for the stage and the drama. Some of his detractors were wont to say that his books and characters were "stagey." God bless him for that, because, in his sympathy for the stage, he had done a great deal to pave the way for the better position of the actor and the dramatist. Dickens was the actor's novelist *par excellence*. There was scarcely an actor of eminence, with perhaps the exception of Sir John Hare and Sir Squire Bancroft, who had not been associated with the great characters of Dickens. Emery, the Keeleys, Toole, Irving, John Clayton, and of our own day Martin Harvey and Beerbohm Tree, had all made great successes in the impersonation of Dickens's characters. Dickens himself was a great friend of the actor. He dedicated *Nicholas Nickleby* to Macrady and was in the habit of borrowing his dress waistcoats. His books were the actor's delight, though the adapter found it most difficult to give a satisfactory account of the author. When *Oliver Twist* was first produced at the Surrey Theatre Dickens at the beginning of the first act sat on the floor of the box and remained there until the curtain fell. (Laughter.) Dickens was always happy in the company of actors, both in his own life and in his work.

The toast was drunk in silence.

Mr. Fitzgerald gave some reminiscences of the novelist, and drew a picture of him as he knew him as one of the most modest of men.

Mr. H. F. Dickens endorsed Mr. Alexander's verdict that his father was the actor's friend. He was imbued from top to toe with the instinct of an actor, and very nearly became one. That he was an actor no one could doubt who had heard him recite. They were not there to bolster up Dickens's reputation, but to show the sympathy existing between him and his readers.

Sir Charles Mathews proposed the toast of the Chairman in a very felicitous speech. During the evening M. Johannes Wolf and Miss Elaine Dickens delighted the company with their charming violin playing.

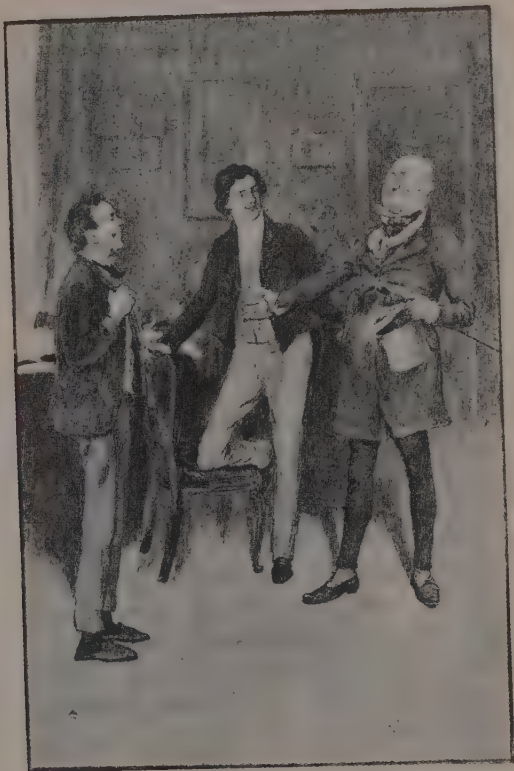
An interesting souvenir booklet, containing a series of portraits of the novelist at different periods of his life, was presented to each guest.

ANOTHER PICKWICKIAN LANDMARK GOING

THE removal of the Westminster County Court from Portugal Street to St. Martin's Lane leaves vacant the building formerly known as the Insolvent Debtors' Court, described in *Pickwick* as being a "lofty room, ill-lighted and worse ventilated." Afterwards it was the Old Bankruptcy Court, and for two years was used as the Westminster County Court. It was a genuine bit of Dickens, named and located specifically in the book, and consequently a certain amount of real sentiment surrounded it.

DICKENS FOR CHILDREN

MESSRS. NELSON & SONS have sent us two small volumes entitled, respectively, "David and Emily" and "Nell and her Grandfather." As the titles suggest, they are stories adapted from the two works of Dickens in which these characters appear. The volumes are designed for the requirements of children, and are abridged and written in simple language with the incidents con-



TRADDLES, DAVID, AND MICAWBER

From a Drawing by W. Rainey

nected with each chosen to make a complete narrative. They are well done, and should serve the purpose admirably of introducing young people to the work of the novelist, and so inspire in them a desire later to read the full books.

They are attractively produced, and fully illustrated with excellent pictures by various artists, one of which, by W. Rainey, we are able to reproduce, through the courtesy of the publishers.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

LI

A DICKENS ALPHABET

By F.

A's for the Artful, the Dodger, the Prig,
 Bumble's the Beadle, the Bumptious, the Big ;
 C is for Chadband, sham-pious and oily,
 D stands for Dora, who wheedles so coyly ;
 E stands for Esther, a *little* too good,
 Fledgeby's the sneak—to whom Lammle was rude.
 G is for Gamp, much addicted to gin,
 H is for Heep, with a villainous grin ;
 Ivens (Jemima), who visits the Eagle,
 Jingle did grossly Miss Wardle inveigle ;
 Kenwig's by progeny much over-weighted,
 Lillyvick, amorous ass, addle-pated ;
 M is Miss Miggs, who hated the Pope,
 Nadgett, 'mid mysteries much loved to grope ;
 Orlick, who cherished a murderous hate,
 PICKWICK, IMMORTAL, ILLUSTRIOUS, GREAT ;
 Quayle, the philanthropist, known by his bumps,
 Rosa (dear Rosebud !) loved sweet stuff in lumps ;
 Swiveller the reckless, too fond of his beer,
 Twemlow, the gentleman, modest, sincere ;
 Uncle (that's Pumblechook), humbug and fool,
 Vholes, the respectable, vulturous ghoul ;
 Weller, the cockney-wit, brimful of jest,
 Xmas, the season that Dickens loved best ;
 Y's for Young John, who of hopeless love sickens,
 Zigzag's for Rambles with Allbut and Dickens.

LITTLE EM'LY

AT THE CRIPPLEGATE THEATRE

By GILBERT THOMAS

ON Monday night, February 15th, Mr. Frederick T. Harry presented, at the Cripplegate Theatre, his new play from Dickens in three acts, entitled *Little Em'ly*. The occasion was naturally one of peculiar interest to Dickens lovers—more especially as the book dramatised was *David Copperfield*, for which all true Dickensians must harbour a more sincere affection than for any other of the master's works—and it was gratifying to see such a large and enthusiastic audience as was then assembled.

It may at once be said that Mr. Harry's efforts were rewarded with a considerable degree of success. There was a lack, however, of certain elements in his adaptation that robbed it of what otherwise it might well have possessed—distinction. The scenes chosen, for instance, were by no means cheerful; indeed, had it not been for the relief afforded by the willing Barkis' loving attentions to the bashful Peggotty, we venture to say that the performance would have verged on being gloomy. As it was, it came far short of being fairly representative either of the infinite variety of Dickens or even of the particular book in question. The main incidents depicted in Act I. were the visit of Copperfield and Steerforth to Dan'l Peggotty's house-boat at Yarmouth, and the subsequent flight of Steerforth with Little Em'ly. Several months rolled away in the interval, and when the curtain rose Mrs. Steerforth and Rosa Dartle were disclosed, engaged in a ferocious combat of words with the inconsolable Dan'l; while the second scene showed Martha the out-cast's attempted suicide in the river, her pacification by Copperfield, and afterwards Em'ly's restoration to Dan'l through her agency. Act III. opened with a tableau—James Steerforth drowned; and the last scene of the performance saw the return home of Em'ly and her engagement to her old lover, Ham.

This, in brief, was Mr. Harry's adaptation from Dickens's masterpiece. Though as a play it was distinctly good, it must be admitted that, from a Dickensian view point, the promise of the first act was not fulfilled. We fully appreciate the difficulties that oppose him who endeavours to weave a short play out of the inexhaustible material which such a book as *Copperfield* supplies. Yet such a diversion from the original as Mr. Harry's play exhibits, particularly in the last scene of all, and the total omission of characters such as Micawber and others, are almost unpardonable offences.

These were somewhat atoned for, however, by the acting, which maintained a commendable level throughout, though Little Em'ly as heroine was perhaps a trifle disappointing. The cast was as follows:—

Mrs. Gummidge . . .	Miss Elsie Maynard.
David Copperfield . . .	Mr. Edward Smith.
James Steerforth . . .	Mr. A. E. Brookes-Cross.
Barkis . . .	Mr. A. E. Wass.
Clara Peggotty . . .	Miss Florence Wiggins.
Ham . . .	Mr. R. Malcolm Morley.
Little Em'ly . . .	Miss Vera Grenville.
Dan'l Peggotty . . .	Mr. Fredk. T. Harry.
Martha . . .	Miss Kathleen Marriott.
Littimer . . .	Mr. A. Warwick Browne.
Mrs. Steerforth . . .	Miss Effie Bartlett.
Rosa Dartle . . .	Miss May Daniel.

Mrs. Gummidge was decidedly amusing; "Master Davy," Steerforth, Ham and Martha were all admirable; while Barkis and Peggotty succeeded in throwing the audience into a vociferous flood of laughter. But the honours of the evening belong undoubtedly to Mr. Harry himself, who impersonated Old Dan'l with such nicety

and feeling that it became quite possible to overlook the defects of his adaptation. And the enthusiastic applause with which his final appearance on the stage was welcomed showed clearly that the audience *had* done so, and had, moreover, enjoyed the whole programme to the full.

It only remains to be said that selections of music were rendered by Mr. Charles Troom's excellent orchestra, which added very materially to the pleasantness of the evening.

QUERIES AND ANSWERS

"I didn't know, and now I do know, and that shows the advantage of asking, don't it?"—ROSA DARTLE.

QUERIES

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.—"The mournful statue, the guardian genius of a little wilderness of shrubs, in the centre of the square." Whose is this statue? I am told by one who has offices in the square the subject is not known.

What is the origin of "Snooks," "Walker," "Ferguson," "Is Murphy right?" the secret words and signs of the muffin men?

The gentleman who had been at Crockford's all night "preferred to go the whole animal," is not this the first time this saying has been mentioned in a book? What is its origin?—ARTHUR SCHOMBERG.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MR. SEYMOUR HICKS AND "A CHRISTMAS CAROL"

SIR,—The news that Mr. Seymour Hicks will appear at the Coliseum on March 8th next, in a dramatised version of *A Christmas Carol*, entitled "Scrooge," has filled me with some regret and more sorrow. My regret is that Mr. Hicks should go on the music-hall stage at all. My sorrow is that an actor of his great versatility should, of all the sketches he might have chosen or have had written for him, suitable to the tastes and capacities of a music-hall audience, select this pathetically sweet psalm of life—*butchered* to make a music-hall holiday. Let us look to it that future generations, seeing Dickens with a clearer vision than we who have lived so closely to him can possibly do, recognising him as the greatest novelist of this or any other age or clime, may not say, "Were their appetites so jaded with Harry's this, and George's that, and Marie's the other, that *A Christmas Carol*, that sweet and tender message of love to mankind, had to be put on as a music-hall turn between a comic song and a conjuring act, to whet and stimulate them?"

I have no objection to music-halls, but I do not think they are fitted, either by the necessities of their programme or by their environment, for the exploitation of sacred subjects. I regard *A Christmas Carol* as a sacred subject, and I believe there are thousands of other Dickens worshippers who think with me in that respect. It is a sermon, amplifying and exemplifying Holy Writ itself, telling all in a practical and material manner of the newer and higher and holier duties of man to man which Christ came down on earth to teach. It is a work to be read over quietly and pondered over seriously, so that its glorious lesson of Charity to all men may sink deep into the heart.

It may possibly be thought that I am taking an extreme and unique view of *A Christmas Carol*. If so, I err in excellent company, for sixty-six years ago Thackeray wrote of it:—"As for Tiny Tim, there is a certain passage in the book regarding that young gentleman, about which a man should hardly venture to speak in private or in public any more than he would of any other affections of his private heart." I cannot imagine any version of *A Christmas Carol* which excludes Tiny Tim, the pivot on which the conversion of Scrooge turns. If Tiny Tim is in "Scrooge," I appeal to Thackeray. If he is not, then all the worse for "Scrooge."

These are my general objections to the production of *A Christmas Carol* at a music-hall. In detail I say that as it takes an hour and a half to read, and as it will be played at the Coliseum in something like half an hour, the emasculation is a desecration. We know how intensely Dickens suffered from the literary dramatist in his earlier years, by Nicholas Nickleby's indignant outburst to "the literary gentleman" at the farewell supper given to Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Crummles. The literary gentleman justified his adaptations by the fact that Shakespeare adapted also. "Whereas," retorted Nicholas, "he brought within the magic circle of his genius traditions peculiarly adapted for his purpose, and turned familiar things into constellations which should enlighten the world for ages; you drag within the magic circle of your dulness, subjects not at all adapted to the purpose of the stage, and debase as he exalted . . . cut, hack and carve them to the powers and capacities of your actors, and the capability of your theatre." So the great humanitarian, though dead, speaks to us with the living voice of seventy years ago.

I would not willingly wound any one's feelings, but my love for and reverence of Dickens are part of my existence. To my mind *A Christmas Carol* is a perfect literary cameo, the most beautiful of Dickens's many beautiful writings, because, where all is so human, it is the most human, a great prose poem pulsating with tenderness and love, appealing to the best side of our nature as no other work has ever done. It is for that reason (I truly hope a good and sufficient one) that I object to seeing it debased to the level of a music-hall "turn."

Yours faithfully,

EDWIN CHARLES,

(Author of "Keys to the Drood Mystery.")

"HOW MUCH DID YOU RECEIVE, MR. EDITOR?"

SIR,—Can the wonderful truth and power of Charles Dickens be more fully illustrated than in "Mrs. Jellyby"?

The earthquake in Sicily and money pouring in to the Mansion House Fund in thousands of pounds every day—and most right and proper that it should do so.

But what about the hospitals and charities at our own doors? How much did you receive, Mr. Editor, in response to your kindly appeal for the sick children in Great Ormond Street?

This rush and haste to send money to people a thousand miles away while many of our home charities are well-nigh starving reminds one forcibly of Mrs. Jellyby's friend, "whose church was like a fancy bazaar, but her home was like a howling wilderness." Mrs. Jellyby and Boorioboola Gha are as true and real to-day as ever they were.

Yours faithfully,

A DICKENSIAN.

[We did not receive as much as we should have liked by any means.—EDITOR.]

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

HEADQUARTERS.—An evening with Dickens will be given by members of the Fellowship on Thursday, March 11th, to the Belgrave Presbyterian Church Literary and Debating Society, at the schools, 67, Cadogan Street, Chelsea, S.W., near Sloane Square District Railway Station. Members of the Fellowship will be heartily welcome on showing their membership cards. The programme is being arranged by Miss Emilie M. Miniken, and the chair will be taken at 8.15 p.m. The following ladies and gentlemen, as well as others, have kindly promised to be present and assist in the singing, reciting, &c.:—Madame Lena Michelbacher, Miss Kathleen Marriott, Mr. A. Brookes-Cross, Mr. Walter Dexter, Mr. J. W. T. Ley, Mr. J. W. Douglas, Mr. Sidney Marriott, and Mr. Frank Staff; so there is every possibility of the evening being a very enjoyable one.

BELFAST.—A public meeting was held on February 8th in the Minor Hall, Assembly's Buildings. There was a large attendance of members and their friends. The chair was occupied by Mr. Joseph R. Fisher, B.L., the President of the Branch. The following musical and literary programme was gone through during the evening:—The trial scene *Bardell v. Pickwick*, the characters being cleverly sustained by Miss McVicher, Messrs. E. R. Jackson, B. Kennedy, Walter Barry, J. Kennedy, D. Ervine, F. Kennedy, and S. A. Hunter. Miss C. C. Happer gave a recitation of "The Wreck," from *David Copperfield*, in which she displayed her usual good talent in having caught the true spirit of her subject. The musical programme was acceptably rendered by Miss Katie Cooksey, Miss Emilie Heaney, Mr. John Stewart, and Mr. Joseph Conkey. Miss Kathleen Henderson ably supplied the accompaniments. The chairman, in the course of an interesting address, drew a comparison between the youth of Shakespeare and the youth of Dickens, their respective environment and genius. He further deprecated the fashion of placing the work of Thackeray against that of Dickens, and having emphasised the greatness of both writers, and also that of Scott, Mr. Fisher went on to ask where Dickens stood, and what warrant there was for placing him among the immortals. He appealed to the hearts of the people all over Europe, America, and the British Empire. After Shakespeare, Dickens was secure in company with Defoe, Cervantes, Goldsmith and Scott, and there they might be content to leave him.

BRIGHTON.—On February 6th the members and friends of the Brighton Branch of the Dickens Fellowship met in large numbers in the Lecture Hall of the Y.M.C.A. to celebrate the birthday of the great novelist. The proceedings took the form of a social meeting, and the best known selections from Charles Dickens's most popular works were read and recited. The President, in an appropriate opening speech, congratulated the Fellowship on attaining another birthday celebration, and said that a telegram of similar congratulations had been sent to Headquarters in London. Mr. W. H. Fowler gave a selection from *David Copperfield*. Mr. F. J. Gauntlett, with Miss Russell Davies and Miss Alice Halsey, rendered a sketch from *Dombey and Son*, which met with great appreciation. Miss Goring gave a recitation from the *Pickwick Papers*; and Mr. Gauntlett, the Secretary, concluded the evening with reciting the quarrel between Mrs. Gamp and Betsy Prig, for which he was enthusiastically recalled. At the next meeting, on March 6th, the President, Mr. Henry Davey, gives a paper on *Great Expectations*.

BRISTOL.—On February 1st an interesting meeting was held at the usual place of assembly, under the presidency of Mr. Sidney Marriott. The occasion was devoted to the study of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. An

able paper, contributed by an outside Dickensian, was read by Miss Madeleine Marriott. This was followed by an argumentative address from Mr. Willoughby Matchett. In reference to the intention of Dickens as to the continuation and solution of the "Mystery," he adopted the theory generally held, that Edwin Drood would be murdered by his uncle, in accordance with the evidence afforded by Mr. John Forster—as contained in his biography of the author—and that the character of "Datchery" as the Cloisterham detective was assumed by Bazzard, clerk to Mr. Grewgious. Mr. R. Allbut advanced the opinion that Edwin escaped, afterwards re-appearing to the confusion of his wicked relative. This idea was based on the pictorial assurance of the original monthly wrappers of the six published numbers of the work. Proceedings were concluded by an excellent recitation of the Christmas experiences of Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller at Dingley Dell, by Mr. Willoughby Matchett, for whose visit a cordial vote of thanks was adopted.—On Monday, February 15th, Mr. W. S. Walker in the chair, Mr. F. G. Jackson, of Leeds, being prevented by home engagements from visiting Brixton as per programme, the evening was occupied by a lecture given by the Secretary—"Prince Charlie: his Works and his Ways" (transposed from date April 26th). Two songs rendered in charming style by Miss Sherlock were much appreciated.

DUBLIN.—On January 28th a very enjoyable "Social" was held in the Sackville Café, Mr. Geo. A. Young presiding over a large number of members and friends. The evening was arranged by Miss F. A. Heagan, and an excellent programme was provided. Readings from the works of Dickens were contributed by Mrs. Fottsell, Miss Hogg, Mr. M. D. Collins, and Mr. D. Swaine. Mr. E. H. Kearney, B.L., gave several most amusing recitations, and musical items were contributed by the Misses Gallagher and Kavanagh and Mr. R. Smith.—The Birthday Celebration was held on February 11th. A record attendance filled the room to its utmost capacity, and the meeting went with a swing from start to finish. The chair was occupied by Mr. M. D. Collins, who delivered a eulogistic address on the work and influence of Charles Dickens, which was followed by another, later in the evening, from Mr. Geo. A. Young. Mr. Collins read with great power the last chapter of *A Tale of Two Cities*, and other items were contributed by Miss Brown, Miss B. L'Estrange Graham, Miss Steel, and Miss Constance Collins; and Messrs. E. H. Kearney, B.L., F. Pemberton, Lewis Leahy and E. Maguire. Mr. Victor Newman, who was appearing at the Empire Theatre in a series of character sketches, contributed some items from his repertoire, including "Hamlet," Mr. Alfred Jingle, and an admirable impersonation of Mr. Beerbohm Tree as "Svengali." Mr. Newman's delineations were all excellently presented, and elicited enthusiastic applause.

EDINBURGH.—The branch celebrated the anniversary of Dickens's birth, in the Queen's Hall, on February 8th. Dr. Parrott, Vice-President, occupied the chair, and made an opening address, dwelling on a comparison between Dickens and Burns. The former was the novelist of the people, and the latter the poet of democracy, he said, and then outlined the story of their lives to emphasize his point. During the evening Mr. Victor MacClure gave several impersonations of characters from Dickens, whilst the rest of the programme included musical items rendered by Miss Margaret Smith, Mr. Philip Malcolm, and Mr. R. S. Mitchell.

GLOUCESTER.—At the January meeting at Northgate Mansions, the President (Mr. H. Goddard Chance) referred to the popularity attained by their Fellowship, which had extended beyond their own borders. Mrs. Tyler then read the story of the infatuated old gentleman who made love to Mrs. Nickleby "over the garden wall." Mr. F. H. Bretherton followed with the sturdy John Browdie's trip to London after his marriage, and the rescue of

Smike from the clutches of Squeers; while Mr. Adams gave a capital reading of Nicholas Nickleby's final interview with Mr. Crummles and his "talented company" prior to their departure to America. An interesting discussion followed, several ladies taking part. The President was made the recipient of a repoussé plaque, mounted on oak, of Dickens, the work of Mr. J. B. Fleck; and Mr. Chance, who was quite taken by surprise, expressed his gratitude for the kindly gift and the spirit which prompted it.

HASTINGS.—Mr. W. W. Hoad, who has for five years been the Hon. Secretary of the branch, and Mrs. Hoad, were presented with a silver tea service and an album containing an illuminated address on January 11th at a meeting of the branch which was held at the Queen's Hotel. The meeting was an ordinary one, but, as the members were aware of the exceptional circumstances, they attended in large numbers. Major Vipan, D.S.O., the chairman, in making the presentation, asked Mr. Hoad to accept the silver tea service as a small gift in order that he might recall his memory in future years to their great appreciation for the keen amount of self-denial which he had done for that branch of the Dickens' Fellowship. Major Vipan spoke of Mr. Hoad's good work, and concluded by hoping that he would remain Secretary of the branch for a long time to come. Mr. Wilson Crewdson also spoke appreciatively of Mr. Hoad's work; and, in returning thanks, Mr. Hoad said that it was such a surprise that he could not adequately express himself. The inscription on the teapot was as follows:—"Presented to Mr. W. W. Hoad by the members of Hastings and St. Leonards Branch of the Dickens' Fellowship, January 11th, 1909." The illuminated album contained the names of 200 subscribers. Previously to the presentation, Mrs. Alfred Cruttenden recited a poem entitled "Our Mutual Friend," which had been composed by Miss Maud Gurney Tyler, and dedicated to Mr. Hoad.

HULL.—On January 22nd, Mr. Frank Speaight paid his first visit to this city, under the auspices of the Hull Branch of the Fellowship. The recital given was the *Pickwick Papers*, and the large audience enjoyed it to the utmost. The humours and eccentricities of the Pickwickian party were portrayed in a vivacious and highly talented manner. Mr. W. T. Robson and Miss Gertrude Watson contributed musical items. At the meeting on February 5th, the Rev. G. Borrow took for his subject "Dickens's Portrayal of Child Life." The speaker said that the children of England never had a better friend than Charles Dickens, for his chivalry and gentleness reached their climax in what he did for the defenceless child. Mr. Borrow's essay was rich in thought and sympathy, and filled with enthusiasm for a subject which fully deserved the able treatment it received at his hands.

LIVERPOOL.—A very pleasant evening was held on January 19th, Mr. Wright presiding. A paper of special interest was read by Mr. Charles Porter, on William Edward Tirebuck. Mr. Porter pointed out various characteristics of our late fellow-citizen, giving instances of his genial temperament. Mr. James Watkins then gave a paper on R. L. Stevenson, which included various quotations from his writings and an able analysis of his personal character. Mrs. Helsby, Messrs. Jaggard, Rowlands, Pepper, and Tessimond expressed approval of both papers, and in several instances contributed personal recollections of Mr. Tirebuck. A Social, arranged by the Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. Bell, concluded a most enjoyable evening. On February 2nd, with the President in the chair, Mr. Allan Tracy, of the Fabian Society, lectured on "Some Influences in the Development of Character." After describing the surroundings under which so many workers were compelled to earn a living, surroundings prejudicial both physically and morally, the lecturer went on to advocate the remedy of socialism. He referred to Charles Dickens's work for social reform, and said

he thought Dickens would have been a socialist had he been alive now. On February 9th, a treat was given by our members to upwards of 200 poor children at Eldon Street Schools. The children partook of a hotpot and cake, which they enjoyed thoroughly. A marionette show was then given, much to the children's delight, and on their departure each child was given a toy. Through the kindness of one of our members, oranges were distributed among the little ones. The success of the evening was due to a large and willing band of helpers, who did not spare themselves in their efforts to serve our guests.

LONGWOOD (AUSTRALIA).—The January meeting was held at Dr. Lock's residence: the doctor occupied the chair. The branch is going in strongly for literature, and will soon have a good library. A deal of enthusiasm is evinced by the members, and readings and essays given by them make the evenings a success.

LUDDENDEN.—The branch held a public lecture on January 26th, in the U.M.C. Mr. H. M. Greenwood presided over a large attendance. Mr. Wilkinson Pickles, of Gad's Hill, Sowerby, spoke on "An Evening with Charles Dickens." He gave a very comprehensive lecture, not going into one book deeply, but summing up the lot, in a charming manner. He gave an interesting analysis of *David Copperfield*. He had found a curious mistake which Dickens made of calling a stepmother mother-in-law. Sam Weller speaks of his stepmother as his mother-in-law, and David Copperfield made the opposite error by describing Murdstone, who married his mother, as his father-in-law. We believe, however, that this was the custom of the period, and not a mistake of Dickens. Several friends gave songs, and Mr. A. Thornton was the accompanist.

MAIDSTONE.—On February 1st, Mr. Wm. Miles gave a most successful recital in the Hollingworth Hall, Alderman Vaughan presiding. For an hour Mr. Miles played upon the emotions of the audience with "The Story of Little Dombey," that picture of pathos lightly touched with humour which will always be loved by English readers. The second part of his programme was of a purely humorous character. The ludicrous misadventure of Mr. Winkle at Bath, "The Skating Party at Manor Farm, Dingley Dell," and "The Boots at Holly Tree Inn," from *Pickwick Papers*, and also "Horatio Sparkins," from *Sketches by Boz*, all kept the hearers in a state of merriment. Mr. Miles performed a difficult task with unquestioned success, and was heartily thanked.

PHILADELPHIA.—The annual meeting and birthday celebration was held at the Walton Hotel, on February 10th. The business session, with President John Thompson in the chair, began at 7 o'clock. Reports of the secretary and treasurer showed the branch to be in a flourishing condition, with a membership of 135 and nearly \$300 in the treasury. A new code of bye-laws was adopted, and a donation made to the Children's Homœopathic Hospital sufficient to keep five beds in linen for one year. The election of officers for the ensuing year resulted as follows:—President, John M. Patterson; Vice-Presidents, Leigh Mitchell Hodges, Mrs. S. C. Barnes and Mrs. M. B. Coombs; Secretary, J. K. Thompson; Treasurer, W. S. Rutter, junr.; Executive Council, John C. Eckel, Chas. Sessler, Edwd. S. Strobhar, Miss Curtis Wager-Smith, Mrs. T. O. Woodward. Over 100 attended the dinner, which followed the business meeting, in the ball-room of the hotel. The room was beautifully decorated, the flags of the U.S. and of Great Britain being used, while the tables were resplendent with Dickens's favourite scarlet flowers. The newly elected President, John M. Patterson, acted as toast-master, and after the retiring President, John Thomson, had made an appropriate speech, the Hon. Wilfred Powell, H.B.M.'s Consul at Philadelphia, was introduced. He made a felicitous address touched with

humour and full of appreciation of our beloved author. Others speakers were Dr. M. G. Brumbaugh, ex-Governor Wm. M. Bunn, Judge John L. Kinsey, Prof. John Cowper Powys, and Joseph H. Taulane, Esq. A life-sized portrait of Charles Dickens, after a photograph taken in America, recently painted by Albert G. Rosenthal, was conspicuously placed, and the pen last used by the master and found in the chalet the day after his death, was on exhibition.

SHEFFIELD.—The members provided free breakfasts for some 500 to 600 poor children on Sunday morning, January 24th. Each child was regaled with hot coffee, bread and butter. The arrangements were in the hands of Messrs. Frankish & Dodwell, who were assisted by a number of ladies and gentlemen. The Fellowship was represented by Messrs. G. W. Parker, W. Farmer, J. Dyal, W. Leggett, J. G. Hydes, C. W. Darwin, and T. W. Padmore. After the meal, Mr. J. G. Hydes delivered a short address to the children. For a period of six weeks, during December and January, Mr. L. F. Thompson (a member of the branch), assisted by friends, distributed hot soup and bread twice weekly to the poor children of Heeley district.

The January meeting of the Dickens' Social Club was held at the Cross Scythes Hotel, Derbyshire Lane, on the evening of January 29th, and was well attended. The chair was occupied by the President of the Club, Mr. W. Farmer. Mr. Thos. W. Padmore read a paper on "Dickens as a Social Reformer," and a short debate followed.

Dickens's birthday was celebrated on February 8th, in the Cutlers' Hall. Mr. G. W. Parker presided, and the proceedings were of a social character. To an entertaining programme, Mr. W. F. Bagnall contributed a pianoforte solo, and acted as accompanist; Mr. and Mrs. Jessop gave a duet; and Mrs. Bagnall sang and gave a pleasing reading from *Sketches by Boz*.

TORONTO.—Vice-President Bengough presided at the monthly meeting on January 12th. *Little Dorrit*—the book of the evening—was taken as the text for a programme of more than usual interest. The principal speakers were Prof. Pelham Edgar, of Victoria University, and the Rev. W. H. Hincks, of Parkdale Methodist Church. A male quartette of well-trained voices contributed several selections. Mr. H. Snowden Ward's illustrated lecture, "The Marvels of Photography," was given in Association Hall on January 19th, as the fourth event of the Lyceum Course. The Toronto Camera Club co-operated with the Fellowship, and Mr. Ward was greeted by an audience of nearly 1,300 people, who thoroughly enjoyed his unique series of views and able treatment of the subject. At the close of the lecture, in response to a renewed expression of appreciation from the audience, Mr. Ward referred to his pleasure in appearing under the auspices of the largest Branch of the Fellowship, and congratulated the officers and members of the Society upon the success that has crowned their efforts.

WEST LONDON.—The monthly meeting was held on January 29th, at 21, Uxbridge Road, Ealing. Mr. Jacobs presided. *The Cricket on the Hearth* was very effectively read by the Dramatic Club. Captain Higginson acquitted himself well as "Pearybingle," Miss Watson was excellent as "Dot," and Miss Hughes as "Bertha." Mr. Jacob's "Tackleton" was capital. Mr. Leach took "Caleb Plummer," a difficult part, but he managed it well, as did Mr. Cecil Matthews "Edward Plummer." "Tilly Slowboys," done by Miss Comins, was very clever, and well received. "Mrs. Fielding" was done by Miss Murrell, and "Miss Fielding" by Miss Smith. The evening concluded with a few readings. Mr. Hilton read from *Pickwick*, Mrs. Morris from *David Copperfield*, and Miss Whitehead *Old Chuzzlewit*. Miss G. Harries presided at the piano.

THE GLASGOW DICKENS SOCIETY.—This society celebrated the 97th birthday of the novelist on February 10th. The Athenæum Hall was crowded. Before entering upon an interesting vocal and elocutionary programme illustrative of the work of Dickens, there were short addresses by Sir William Bilsland, the Honorary President; and Principal Sir Donald MacAlister, the Honorary Vice-President. The former spoke of the work of the society and of the great success it had attained, whilst the latter dwelt upon the genius and influence of the novelist, both as a writer and a man. His speech was notable in many ways, and, in dealing with his subject in a broad manner, held the attention of his audience without effort or exaggeration. It was a eulogy from which we would like to quote had we space, but can only congratulate the society on the privilege it had in listening to it. The programme of the evening comprised character sketches from Dickens, contributed by Mr. Victor Macclure; of songs written by the novelist, and rendered by Miss Weir and Miss Wallace of the Moody-Manners Opera Company; and violin solos by Miss Bessie Spence. On Sunday, February 7th, a special service was held in the cathedral, to which reference is made in "When Found—".

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

A Dickens Dictionary: the Characters and Scenes of the Novels and Miscellaneous Works alphabetically arranged. By A. J. Philip. London: Routledge & Sons, Ltd. 8s. 6d. net.

Charles Dickens and Reading. By E. M. Tull, M.J.I. Reprinted from the *Berkshire Chronicle*. Reading: The Chronicle Electric Press. 3d.

MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

"Dickens in Paris." *Statesman* (Bombay), December 25th.

"Imprisonment for Debt." *Furniture Record*, January 15th.

"Hungerford Market." Illus. *Municipal Gazette*, January 15th.

"The Negro in America." By Sir Harry Johnston. *The Times*, January 20th.

"Waistcoats." *The Globe*, January 29th.

"Charles Dickens, The Apostle of the People." By Edwin Pugh. Reviews in *Clarion*, January 29th; *Athenæum*, February 6th.

"Dickens and 'Verdant Green.'" *Liverpool Post* (leader), February 1st.

"The London that Dickens Knew." By Edwin Pugh. *Sphere*, January 30th, Feb. 6th, 13th, and 20th.

"Brooks of Sheffield." *Bristol Times*, February 4th.

"Charles Dickens: A Lecture." By Andrew Carr. *Bromley Times*, February 5th.

"Charles Dickens." By John T. Page. *East London Advertiser*, February 6th and 13th.

"Charles Dickens." *Glasgow Herald*, February 6th.

"Charles Dickens's Last Birthday." By W. Teignmouth Shore. *Liverpool Courier*, February 6th.

"Charles Dickens: His Visits to Ireland." By D. J. O'Donoghue. *Irish Independent*, February 8th.

"Charles Dickens." *Glasgow Times*, February 10th.

"Anniversary of Dickens." *British Congregationalist* (leader), February 11th.

"Written in a Library: Charles Dickens's Birthday, &c." *Bristol Times*, February 13th.

"Examination Paper No. 1: Advanced Dickens." *The Readers' Review*, February.

"Talks about Old London: Bygone Limehouse." *Evening News*, February 17th.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

MARCH

1. Brixton Branch: Evening arranged by Mr. W. J. Sherlock, at Brixton Independent Church, at 8.
2. Liverpool Branch: "Women in Shakespeare," by Mrs. H. D. Roberts, at Royal Institution, at 8.
Toronto Branch: *A Tale of Two Cities*, at Normal School.
3. London: Lantern Lecture, "Humour in Art," by Mr. M. H. Spielmann, at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C., at 8.
Belfast Branch: "Dickens and His Books," by Mr. James Shaw, at Central Hall, Rosemary Street, at 8.
4. Chesterfield Branch: "Dickens as a Social Reformer," by Mr. Creaser, at Trinity Institute, at 8.
Edinburgh Branch: *The Old Curiosity Shop*, papers and discussion, by members, at 5, St. Andrew Square, at 8.
5. Hull Branch: *Bleak House*, criticisms, readings, etc., by members, at Shakespeare Hall, Story Street, at 8.
Manchester Branch: "The Heroic Character—Dickens," by Mr. G. F. Gadd, at Onward Hall, at 7.30.
6. Brighton Branch: Evening arranged by the President at Steine House, Old Steine, at 8.
9. Shrewsbury Branch: Monthly meeting at Alkmund's Room, at 8.
Plymouth Branch: "Dickens and Religion," by Mr. C. W. Bracken, B.A., at Public Library, at 8.
10. Bristol and Clifton Dickens Society (affiliated): *Hard Times*, discussion introduced by Mr. A. J. Tonkin, at Whatley Hall, at 8.
Glasgow Dickens Society: Annual Meeting at Accountants' Hall.
11. Forest Gate Branch: "A Biographical Sketch of Chas. Dickens," with illustrative readings, by Rev. Geo. McLuckie, B.A., at Earlham Hall, at 8.
Dublin Branch: Paper by Mr. Hector J. S. Hughes, at Sackville Café, at 8.
12. Birmingham Branch: Ladies' evening, at Acorn Hotel, Temple Street, at 7.30.
15. Brixton Branch: Reading by the Rev. J. Thurston Pain, at Brixton Independent Church, at 8.
Southampton Branch: Readings by the Rev. W. A. C. Chevalier, the Rev. W. Garwood, and others, at St. Paul's Parish Room, Bedford Place, at 8.
16. Liverpool Branch: Readings from Dickens, by members, at Royal Institution, at 8.
18. Rochester Branch: Annual conversazione, at Bull Hotel, at 8.
Chesterfield Branch: Social at Trinity Institute, at 8.
Edinburgh Branch: *The Old Curiosity Shop*, papers and discussion, by members, at 5, St. Andrew Square, at 8.
19. Hull Branch: "A Few Scenes and Episodes," with lantern illustrations, by Mr. F. Bacon, at Shakespeare Hall, Story Street.
Plymouth Branch: Fortnightly meeting, at Public Library, at 8.
25. Stockport Branch: "The Schoolmasters of Dickens," by Mr. Adams, at Sunday School, at 8.
Dublin Branch: Debate, "Did Dickens Delineate True Characters?" at Sackville Café, at 8.
West London: Social, at Town Hall, Ealing, at 8.
26. Sheffield Branch: Social evening, at Cutlers' Hall, at 8.
29. Brixton Branch: Whist Drive, at Raleigh Hall, Brixton, at 8.
30. Liverpool Branch: Closing of session, at Royal Institution, at 8.



THE LIGHTHOUSE

Painted by Clarkson Stanfield, [R.A.], for the drop scene in the play of the same name (*see page 91*)